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32
JUN

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



McFARLANE

image COMICS PRESENTS:

"APPEARANCES"



story

TODD McFARLANE

art

**GREG CAPULLO
TODD McFARLANE**

copy editor & letters

TOM ORZECOWSKI

color

**STEVE OLIFF
QUINN SUPPLEE
and OLYOPTICS**

a special thanks to

**KEVIN CONRAD
JULIA SIMMONS**

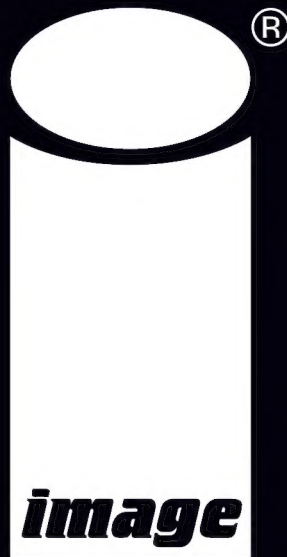
**Dedicated to:
My Wife-Wanda Kolomyjec**

FOR IMAGE COMICS

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**Director Of Creative Development: TERRY FITZGERALD.
Graphics Coordinator: JULIA SIMMONS.**



image

NEW
YORK
CITY.

IN ANY LIGHT, THIS STRUCTURE IS A TESTAMENT IN STEEL AND GLASS. IT TAKES ON A MONOLITHIC MAGNIFICENCE AT NIGHT.

ITS CLEAN LINES ARE BROKEN WITH JUST THE BAREST OF ADORNMENTS, PLACED TO ACCENTUATE ITS HEIGHT. TO THE CASUAL ONLOOKER IT SEEMS TO TOUCH THE HEAVENS.

IN SOME INSTANCES, IT DOES.

AT THE MOMENT, THIS SELF-ASSURED FACADE HIDES A MASSIVE REORGANIZATION. THE **PREVIOUS** DIRECTOR OF TERRAN AFFAIRS WAS UNABLE TO DISTINGUISH BUSINESS FROM MISDIRECTED SELF-INTEREST. HER TAIN MUST BE SWEEPED AWAY. SUPPLANTED.

THE BUSINESS OF BUSINESS, AFTER ALL, IS BUSINESS. THIS FRANCHISE WISHES THE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE OF ITS "FRONT OFFICE":

HEAVEN
ITSELF.





THIS CREATURE'S PRESENCE HERE HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH THE BUILDING'S DIVINE LANDLORD.



COMPOSED OF NECRO-PLASM, THIS NEW WARRIOR OF THE DAMNED COMES BOUND TO A BODY-SHEATHING, RED AND BLACK NEURAL PARASITE.

OVER THE CENTURIES, THESE WARRIORS HAVE BEEN NAMED IN HUSHED WHISPERS:

THEY OCCUR BUT ONCE EACH FOUR HUNDRED YEARS, AND BY THEIR INFREQUENCY ARE RELEGATED TO FABLE AND LEGEND.

EACH OCCURRENCE, THOUGH, SIGNALS THE INEVITABILITY OF AN ULTIMATE, UNHOLY WAR. OUR EARTH IS A CONVENIENT TRAINING GROUND.



"SPAWN."

MORE APPROPRIATELY, "HELLSPAWN."

THE PENTHOUSE SUITE OF OFFICES COMMANDS A VIEW WHICH SEEMS IMPOSSIBLY FAR-RANGING. WITH HER BACK TO IT ALL, THE NEWLY-APPOINTED DIRECTOR PREPARES FOR A MEETING. A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING. HAVING BEEN IN "THE SERVICE" NOW FOR WELL OVER TWO MILLENNIA, SHE UNDERSTANDS THE NEED FOR SUCH GET-TOGETHERS.

TODAY'S CONFERENCE IS TO FORMALLY SET THE GROUND RULES.



UPPER MANAGEMENT'S BUSINESS PLAN MUST BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD... PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF GABRIELLE'S FIASCO.*

* SEEN IN THE ANGELA MINI SERIES - T.M.

LIKE ANY SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYEE, RAFAEL KNOWS ONE'S APPEARANCE IS IMPORTANT AT THESE SESSIONS.



HER REPORTS ARE READY, AND THEY SHOW ALL CURRENT ACTIVITIES ARE CLEAN. A FEW NEW POLICIES OF HER OWN ARE ALREADY IN EFFECT, AND SHE HOPES THEY WILL APPROVE.



MS RAFAEL, THE DIGNITARIES ARE HERE.

SEND THEM IN, PLEASE.

SHE'S FEELING CONFIDENT.



THOUGH
A BIT
NERVOUS.



PLEASE!
MAKE YOUR-
SELVES
COMFORTABLE.

MAY I
GET YOU
ANY-
THING?

NO. BUT
THANK
YOU FOR
ASKING.

AS YOU
KNOW, WE DON'T
HAVE A GREAT
DEAL OF TIME. THERE
ARE OTHER MEETINGS.
I HOPE YOU
UNDERSTAND?

OF
COURSE.

GOOD.
THEN COME HERE,
MY CHILD. LET ME
GET A LOOK
AT YOU.



MY, BUT **YOU'RE** A PRETTY ONE, **ALSO**. IT WARMS MY **HEART** TO SEE EVERY-ONE TAKE SUCH **GOOD CARE** OF THEIR VESSELS.

I APPRECIATE YOUR KIND WORDS.

YOU'RE MOST **WELCOME**. WOULD YOU DO ME A **FAVOR** TODAY? YOUR MOTHER'S NAME WAS **MARY**. I'D REALLY LIKE IT IF YOU'D CALL **ME** THAT, TOO.

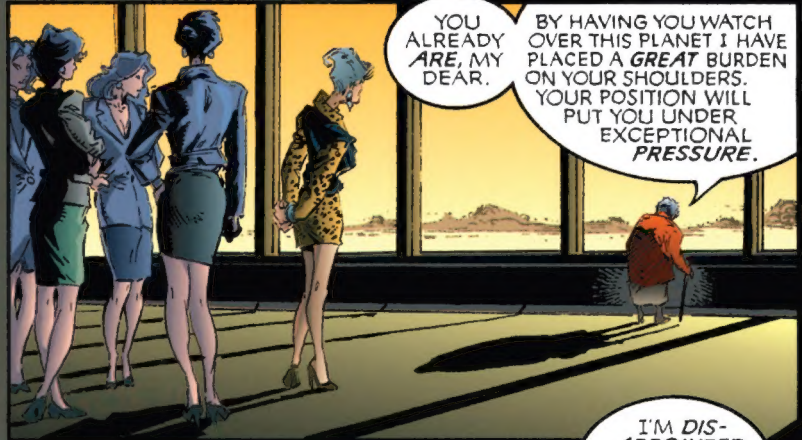
JUST FOR TODAY.

IT WOULD BE AN HONOR.



I HADN'T THOUGHT OF HER IN SUCH A LONG TIME. THANK YOU FOR REMINDING ME.

NOW, HOW MAY I BE USEFUL, MARY?



YOU ALREADY **ARE**, MY DEAR.

BY HAVING YOU WATCH OVER THIS PLANET I HAVE PLACED A **GREAT BURDEN** ON YOUR SHOULDERS. YOUR POSITION WILL PUT YOU UNDER EXCEPTIONAL **PRESSURE**.




I'M **DIS-APPOINTED** YOUR PREDECESSOR DIDN'T WORK OUT.

WE CANNOT **AFFORD** THOSE KINDS OF ERRORS--FOR EVIL IS AN **OBSERVANT** ADVERSARY, ONE WHO FLOURISHES IN OUR TIMES OF **WEAKNESS**.



OUR GOAL IS TO **LISTEN**. TO **LEARN**. WE GUIDE **ONLY** THOSE WHO **ASK**, AND EVEN **THEN** THEY MUSTN'T KNOW IT'S **US...**

...FOR THE HUMAN SOUL IS SALVATION FOR **ALL** OF US.



SALVATION?

DOES THAT
INCLUDE THE
TORTURED
AND DAMNED?

GUARDS!
GET SECURITY
IN HERE--
NOW! WE HAVE
A LEVEL EIGHT
ATTACK!! CLEAR
THE LEADER
AWAY FROM
THE THREAT!

VIOLENCE
FROM EITHER
SIDE, WILL NOT
END OUR
DIFFICULTIES.

WHERE
IS HE?

YOU
KIDNAPPED
MY FRIEND.
I'VE COME
TO TAKE HIM
BACK.

HOW **DARE**
YOU COME HERE!
YOUR MASTER KNOWS
THIS A CONFLICT-FREE,
NEUTRAL ZONE. YOUR SIDE
HAS JUST MADE A **GRAVE**
MISTAKE BY DISOBEYING
THE PEACE TREATY.
OUR CEASE-FIRE
IS NOW VOID!

WHAT'S TAKING
SECURITY--?

ABRUPTLY, THAT QUESTION BECOMES MOOT.

SURROUND HIM.

PREPARE TO FIRE, AT MY COMMAND.

YOU'VE GOT NOWHERE TO RUN, HELL-SPAWN. GIVE YOURSELF UP-- OR DIE.

CORNERED.

WITH NO WAY TO ESCAPE, SPAWN CONSIDERS HIS NEXT TACTIC. INSTINCTIVELY, FOR PROTECTION, HE GRABS THE THING CLOSEST TO HIM.

DON'T MAKE ME HURT HER. JUST GIVE ME WHAT I WANT, AND I'LL LEAVE.

AS HE DELIVERS HIS THREAT, HE'S AWARE OF THE COSTUME GOING LIMP.

IT MUST BE TIRED, HE THINKS. THE CHANGES HAVE COME AT A PRICE.



SPAWN'S MIND THEN FLASHES BACK TO EVENTS A FEW HOURS EARLIER.

THE REDEEMER HAD JUST TAKEN BOBBY VANISHED RIGHT BEFORE HIS EYES. SPAWN WAS LEFT, POWERLESS, LYING IN STINKING DEBRIS IN THE ALLEY.

THEN IT HAPPENED. THE COSTUME AROSE FROM THE DEAD.

IT FELT DIFFERENT NOW... CHANGED SOMEHOW BY ITS OWN INTERNAL NEEDS. SPAWN SENSED ITS NEW MOOD.

IT WAS ANGRY.

THE ONLY THING LACKING WAS A DIRECTION FOR THE ANGER TO VENT.

I SEE YOU'RE STILL TRYING TO LEARN. YOU MIGHT NEED THIS.

CAGLIOSTRO. A MYSTERIOUS VAGRANT, WHO IN SOME STRANGE FASHION, KNEW WHAT SPAWN WAS GOING THROUGH.

WHAT IS IT?

INFORMATION.

BUT IT'S BLANK.

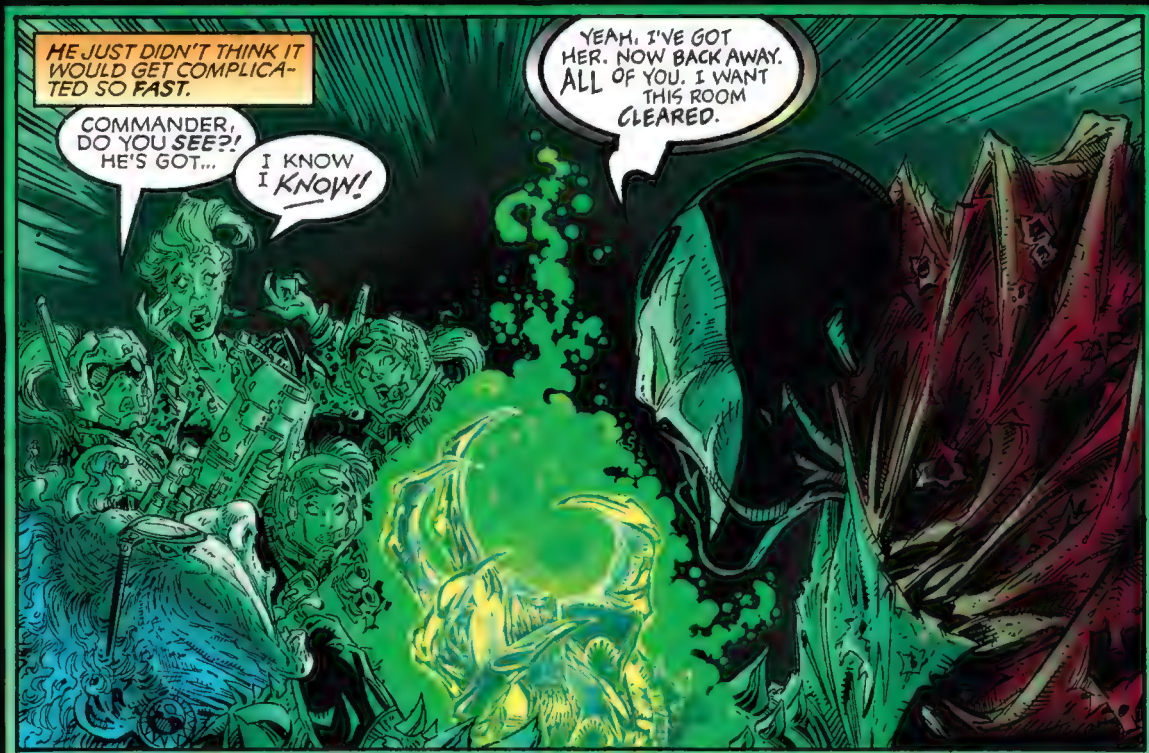
YOU STILL HAVE MUCH TO ACCEPT. YOUR FRIEND NEEDS YOU. CONTROL YOUR RAGE SO THAT YOU MAY HELP HIM.

LOOK AGAIN.

9 East 48th St.

AN ADDRESS. WHEN HE LOOKED UP, CAGLIOSTRO WAS GONE.

IT DIDN'T MATTER. SPAWN KNEW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.

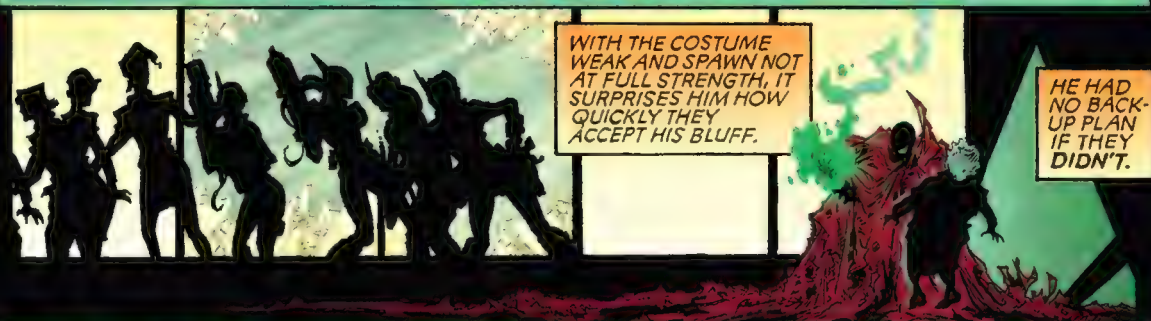


HE JUST DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD GET COMPLICATED SO FAST.

COMMANDER, DO YOU SEE?! HE'S GOT...

I KNOW I KNOW!

YEAH, I'VE GOT HER. NOW BACK AWAY. ALL OF YOU. I WANT THIS ROOM CLEARED.



WITH THE COSTUME WEAK AND SPAWN NOT AT FULL STRENGTH, IT SURPRISES HIM HOW QUICKLY THEY ACCEPT HIS BLUFF.

HE HAD NO BACK-UP PLAN IF THEY DIDN'T.



EXCEPT YOU!

IT SEEMS YOU'RE THE LEADER-- SO YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO HELP SOLVE MY PROBLEM.



I SWEAR-- IF YOU HURT HER, I'LL BRING ALL OF HEAVEN DOWN UPON YOU!

LADY, I'M NOT CONCERNED ABOUT ME RIGHT NOW. I WANT MY FRIEND, BOBBY. NOW WHERE IS HE?

YOUR FRIEND IS NOWHERE NEAR HERE.

AN INTELLIGENT SPAWN WOULD KNOW THAT.

IT'S OBVIOUS YOUR MASTER HAS PICKED ANOTHER WEAK CANDIDATE TO BE HIS MESSENGER.



I'VE TRIED EVERY-
THING. I JUST KEEP
RUNNING INTO BRICK WALLS.
YOU KNOW HOW SLICK THE C.I.A.
CAN BE. I'M JUST SORRY I
HAVEN'T MADE TIME LATELY
FOR YOU AND CYAN, BUT
THIS MESS IS ALL I
THINK ABOUT.

I CAN'T REST
UNTIL IT'S
SOLVED.
UNFORTUNATELY,
THEY'VE FORCED
MY HAND.

WHAT
D'YA
MEAN?

EVER SINCE THEY
ABRUPTLY STOPPED ACCUSING
ME OF BEING A SPY, I'VE BEEN
TREATED REALLY WELL. **TOO** NICELY,
IF YOU ASK ME. THEY'VE OFFERED
ME NUMEROUS GREAT PROMOTIONS,
BUT I THINK IT'S THEIR WAY OF
BUYING MY **SILENCE**. NOW I'M
BACKED INTO A CORNER AND THE
ONLY WAY OUT IS TO **TAKE** ONE
OF THOSE OFFERS. I HAVE
TO GET **CLOSER** TO WYNN
IF I'M GOING TO
SOLVE THIS.

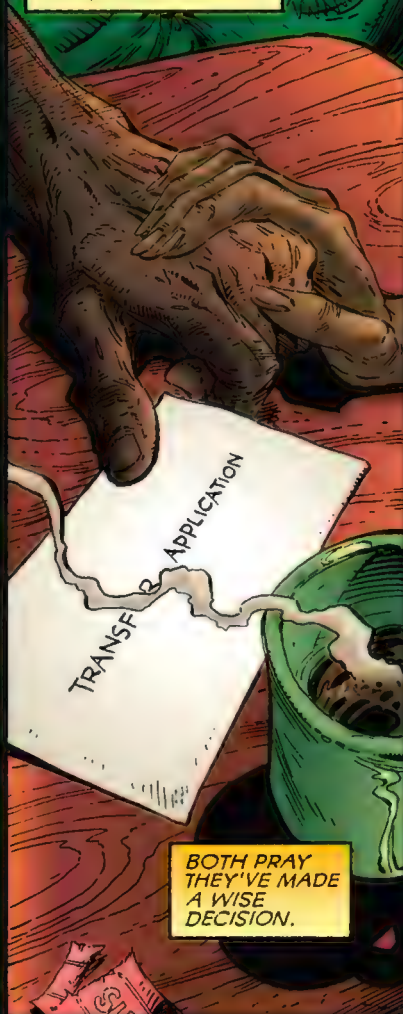
I'VE ALREADY
COMPLETED MY
TRANSFER
PAPERS.



YOU
CAN'T BE
SERIOUS.

DEADLY.

TERRY FITZGERALD
AND WANDA BLAKE
SIT NOW IN
AWKWARD SILENCE.
THEN, AN UNSPOKEN
UNDERSTANDING
IS ACHIEVED.



BOTH PRAY
THEY'VE MADE
A WISE
DECISION.

CALMLY, HE
RECLINES IN
HIS CHAIR.
JASON WYNN,
SUPREME
DIRECTOR OF
U.S. INTELLIGENCE
AGENCIES, IS NOT
GIVEN TO HYSTERICS.

I CAN'T
TAKE IT ANY
MORE! YOU
HAVE TO DO
SOMETHING!
ANYTHING!
THIS COULD RUIN
OUR CAREERS!
OUR LIVES!

CALM
YOURSELF,
MY FRIEND.
NO ONE IS
GOING TO
DESTROY
US.

ARE
YOU **CRAZY?!?**

SOMEONE'S LINKED
US TO **BILLY KINCAID!**
HANGING OUT WITH A
CHILD KILLER--
THAT DOESN'T GET
SWEEP AWAY
TOO EASILY!

HOW MANY
OTHERS DO
YOU THINK
KNOW ABOUT
THIS?!

I'VE RECEIVED A
FILE CONTAINING
CLASSIFIED INFOR-
MATION WHICH NO
OUTSIDER SHOULD
HAVE. THE FILE
WAS GIVEN BY
SOMEONE
CALLED
SPAWN. *

ISSUE 24 -- TIME

WHAT!!

WHY
WOULD
SOME PSYCHO
HERO HAVE IT
IN FOR US?

ALL I KNOW IS,
I'M NOT **ABOUT**
TO LOSE EVERY-
THING I'VE WORKED
FOR. SO YOU **DO**
SOMETHING
ABOUT IT.
ANYTHING!

BELIEVE
ME, BANKS.
I'VE ALREADY
STARTED.

I'M NO
ONE'S
PUPPET.
PERIOD.

I'LL KEEP THIS
SIMPLE. YOU'VE GOT
EXACTLY FIVE SECONDS
TO TELL ME WHERE
MY FRIEND IS.

OTHERWISE,
GRANDMA HERE
IS GOING TO BE
MY PROVERBIAL
"EYE FOR AN
EYE."

ANOTHER
BLUFF.
IT'S ALL
HE HAS
LEFT.

IDIOT!

YOUR
FRIEND
ISN'T *HERE*.
HE'S NOT
EVEN ON
EARTH!

THAT'S
YOUR
PROBLEM.

LIKE I
SAID...

FIVE.


FOUR.

THREE.

TWO.

ALL RIGHT.
YOU WIN.

LUCKILY, FOR--
INEXPLICABLY--
HIS POWERS HAVE
SHUT DOWN.



ORBITAL
STATION ONE,
COME IN. THIS IS
TERRAN HEAD-
QUARTERS.

ACKNOWLEDGED

WE NEED
YOU TO RETURN
THE CAPTURED
SENTIENT BEING
TO OUR BASE
IMMEDIATELY.

REQUEST
DENIED

EXPERIMENTS
ON THAT SUBJECT ARE
INCOMPLETE AT PRESENT
CURRENT DATA SHOW
PERPLEXING READINGS
UNABLE TO RELEASE
SUBJECT AT
THIS TIME

GENTLEMEN,
THIS IS *NOT* A REQUEST.
IT IS A *COMMAND*, AND AS
YOUR SUPERIOR I *DEMAND*
THAT HE BE SENT DOWN HERE
AT ONCE WITH THE PROPER
ESCORT. YOU HAVE *ONE*
MINUTE TO COMPLY WITH
MY ORDERS. DO YOU
UNDERSTAND?

AFFIRMATIVE

SECONDS LATER, A PIERCING BLAST OF LIGHT ANNOUNCES BOBBY'S RETURN TO EARTH.

WITH HIM COMES THE REDEEMER-- THE ONE WHO MADE OFF WITH HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE. SPAWN HAD SPECULATED ON THIS TURN OF EVENTS.

HE WAS HOPING IT WOULDN'T HAVE COME TO THIS.

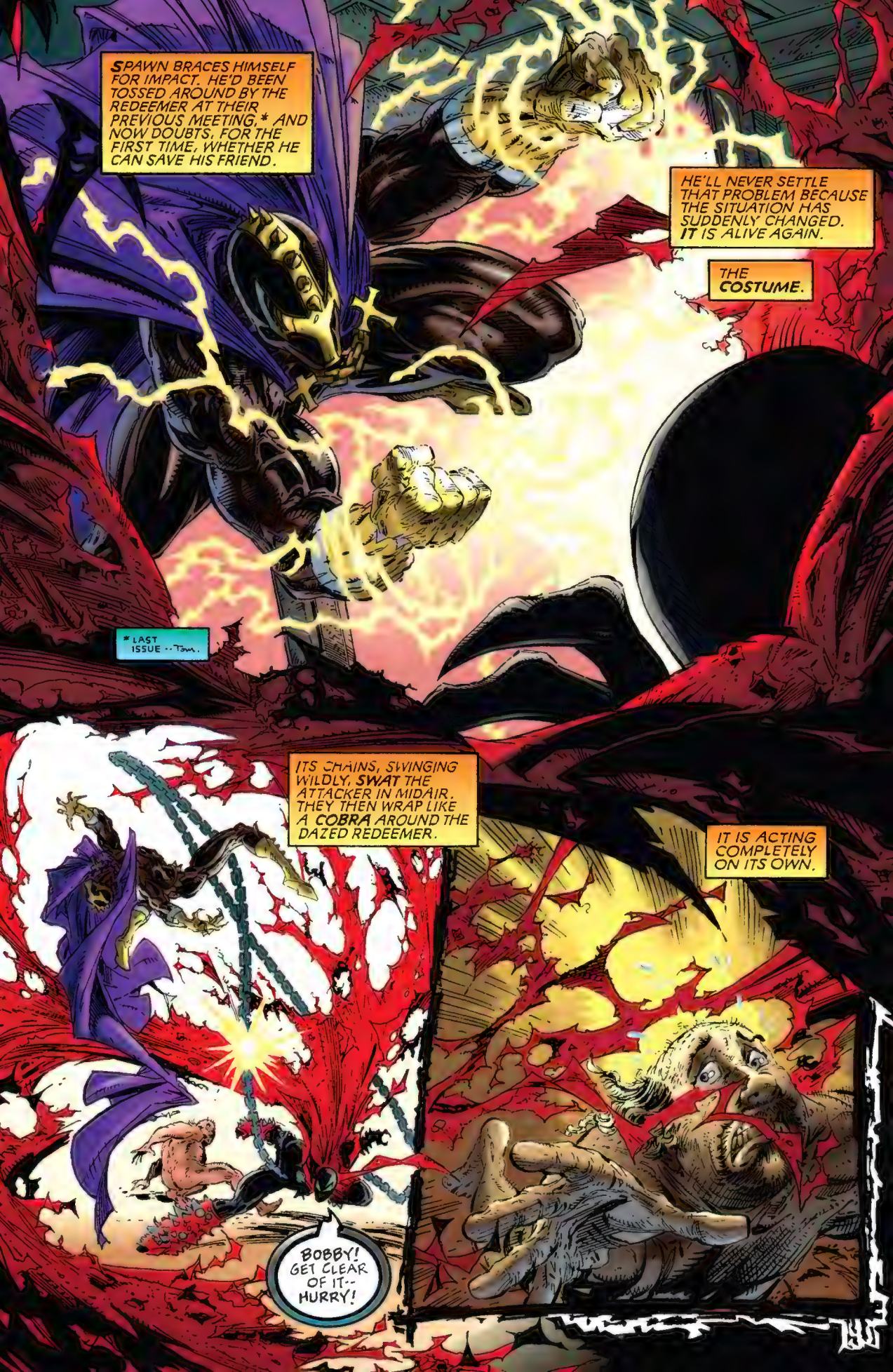
RELEASE HIM AND I'LL GO PEACEFULLY.

IT'S FAR TOO LATE FOR THAT. YOU'VE BROKEN THE PACT BETWEEN OUR DOMAINS BY INVADING THIS SITE AND THREATENING OUR LEADER.

AL...
HELP ME.

YOU'LL NOT GO UNPUNISHED.

REDEEMER--
FINISH HIM!



SPAWN BRACES HIMSELF FOR IMPACT. HE'D BEEN TOSSED AROUND BY THE REDEEMER AT THEIR PREVIOUS MEETING,* AND NOW DOUBTS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, WHETHER HE CAN SAVE HIS FRIEND.

HE'LL NEVER SETTLE THAT PROBLEM BECAUSE THE SITUATION HAS SUDDENLY CHANGED. IT IS ALIVE AGAIN.

THE COSTUME.

* LAST ISSUE -- T.M..

ITS CHAINS, SWINGING WILDLY, SWAT THE ATTACKER IN MIDAIR. THEY THEN WRAP LIKE A COBRA AROUND THE DAZED REDEEMER.

IT IS ACTING COMPLETELY ON ITS OWN.

BOBBY!
GET CLEAR
OF IT--
HURRY!

LIKE SOME FEROCIOUS BEAST, THE COSTUME FLAILS VIOLENTLY. IT WILL ALLOW NOTHING TO COME NEAR. THEN, LIKE THE CHAINS, THE CAPE LAUNCHED ITS OWN ATTACK.

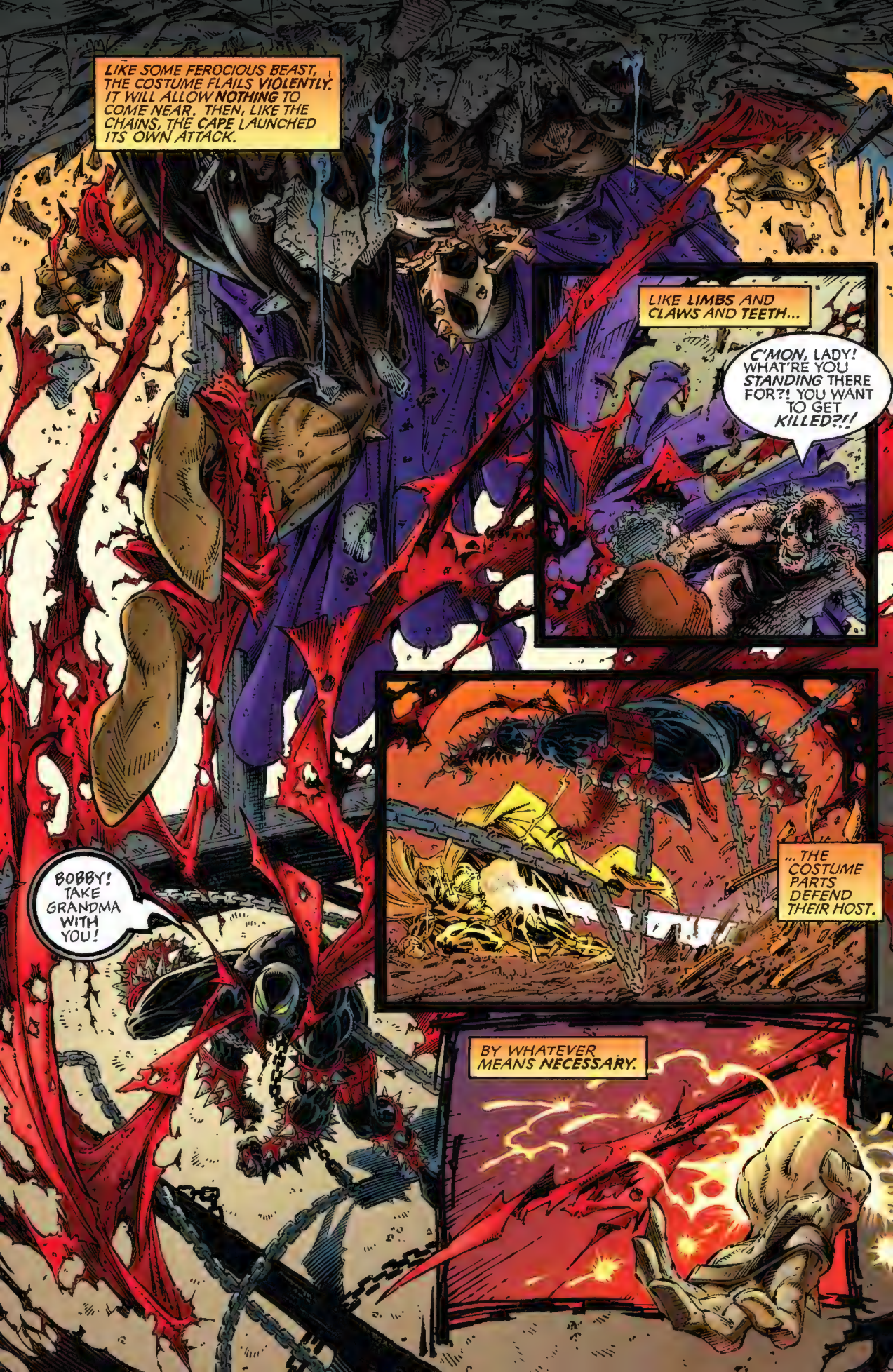
LIKE LIMBS AND CLAWS AND TEETH...


C'MON, LADY! WHAT'RE YOU STANDING THERE FOR?! YOU WANT TO GET KILLED?!!

BOBBY! TAKE GRANDMA WITH YOU!

... THE COSTUME PARTS DEFEND THEIR HOST.

BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY.






THE REDEEMER REACTS LESS WITH ANGER THAN SHOCK AT THE SUDDEN AMPUTATION. UNCONTROLLABLY, THE STUMP SPEWS ELEMENTAL FIRE, DEMOLISHING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH...

... ITS DEVASTATION THREATENING EVEN THOSE HE SERVES...

GRANNY, I'M SORRY I HAD TO USE YOU EARLIER, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE.

GREAT! NOW I NEED TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE. IT'S NOT SAFE.

AS HE TOUCHES HER ARM TO GUIDE HER, THE COSTUME BECOMES LIFELESS AGAIN. BEFORE SPAWN CAN EVEN REACT, THE REDEEMER BLASTS HIM, FACE ON.



... YET SPAWN TURNS HIS BACK TO THE BARRAGE WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

I UNDERSTAND.

THE INTENSE FORCE THROWS SPAWN INTO BOBBY, THEN SLAMS BOTH INTO THE NEXT ROOM.

WHILE HE LAYS CATCHING HIS BREATH, SPAWN TURNS TO SEE THAT THE ARTILLERY HAS ARRIVED.

FIRE AT WILL!
DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE THIS TIME!

TO HIS MIND, THIS IS ARMAGEDDON.

AL! **DO** SOMETHING!

HANG ON, BOBBY. WE'RE GOING TO...

KOON!!!

THE BUILDING'S OUTER SHELL EVAPORATES.

IN A HEARTBEAT,
TRILLIONS OF MOLECULES
DISINTEGRATE.

TRANSFERRED AT THE SPEED OF
LIGHT, THEY REASSEMBLE IN THE
WASTE AND DECAY OF NEW YORK
CITY'S **BOWERY**.



CAG?!
I NEED YOUR
HELP. AL'S NOT
MOVING! I
THINK HE'S
HURT.

HE'S JUST
UNCONSCIOUS.
DON'T WORRY.

OUR FRIEND
FARED SURPRISINGLY
WELL, CONSIDERING
HE JUST SURVIVED
A BATTLE WITH
GOD.

WHAT
DO YA
MEAN? ARE
YOU SAYING
GOD
WAS UP
THERE?!!

A CHAMELEON
OF SORTS, THE
LORD CAN APPEAR
IN MANY FORMS.




HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN, RAFAEL?

ME?! DON'T YOU DARE ACCUSE ME. IT WAS THE **SECURITY** SYSTEM THAT FAILED, NOT MY AUTHORITY.

BUT, OUR FORTRESS HAS NEVER BEEN BREACHED BY ONE OF THEM BEFORE.

GIRLS.




-- AND THOSE WHO ARE TRULY EVIL. TODAY, THE SYSTEM WORKED PERFECTLY... FOR OUR VISITOR WAS **NEITHER**. MY CHILDREN, YOU ARE TOO QUICK TO **ACT**. THE INTRUDER IS MORE THAN YOU THINK. MUCH LIKE YOURSELVES, HE STRUGGLES TO FIND ANSWERS. ON HIS QUEST HE IS FACED WITH CONFUSION...

... AND FROM THE CONDUCT I WITNESSED TODAY, I'D SAY SO ARE YOU, PROVING TO ME THAT **NEITHER** SIDE IS READY FOR THE GREAT BATTLE.

YOU SEE, THOUGH AL SIMMONS DOESN'T KNOW IT, I **ALLOWED** HIM TO DO WHAT HE DID-- BECAUSE HE WAS FIGHTING NOT FOR HIMSELF, BUT FOR A **FRIEND**.

PLEASE. MAY I HAVE A MOMENT?

THIS EVENT HAS BEEN NO ONE'S FAULT. AS YOU ARE ALL AWARE, THE SECURITY SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO DETER THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE--



YET MAKE NO MISTAKE. THE SPARKS HAVE BEEN STRUCK. AND ONE DAY, WITH TIME AND GUIDANCE, **HIS TIME** WILL COME.



Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE